

MIAMI-DADE PARKS DISABILITY SERVICES

June 2011

Support the Leisure Access Foundation

The Leisure Access Foundation is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit agency that was created to improve opportunities for individuals with disabilities to participate in leisure programs. It provides additional funding when needed to support many of the programs offered by MDPR such as wheelchair tennis, wheelchair basketball, and Goalball. If you would like to make a financial or in-kind contribution to the Leisure Access Foundation, please call 305-365-6706.

Contact Information

Disability Services

Administration

7300 Crandon Blvd

305-365-6706

AD Barnes

3401 SW 72 Ave.

305-665-5319

Coral Estates Park

1405 SW 97 Ave.

305-226-1622

Gould's Park

11350 SW 216 St.

305-234-1673

Greynolds Park

17530 W. Dixie Highway

305-945-3425

Camp Matecumbe

13841 SW 120 St.

305-752-4966

Paralympic Sport Club

305-234-1673

Tamiami Park

11201 SW 24 St.

305-222-2128

Westwind Lakes Park

6805 SW 152 Ave.

305-380-9106

UPCOMING FALL PROGRAMS

- Goalball, contact Jody Cox 305-234-1673
- Autism Sports, contact Arlene Bouza-Jou 305-222-2128
- Special Olympics, contact Gisel Prado 305-665-5319
- Handcycling, contact Jody Cox, 305-234-1673
- Wheelchair Basketball, contact Jody Cox 305-234-1673
- Jr. Wheelchair Tennis, contact Diana Bonet 305-380-9106
- Aquatics, contact Belinda Phillips 305-742-4966

Inclusion and Accessibility to the MDPR System

Miami Dade Parks is committed to including children and adults with disabilities in general park programs. General recreation staff participate annually in Inclusion Training to reinforce their skills and Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialists are on hand to assist when needed. If you are interested in participating in a program and feel you may need an accommodation, please call the Parks Disability Services Administrative office at 305-365-6706.

In striving to make our Park system as accessible to persons with disabilities as possible, we have the following equipment for use by persons with disabilities at no charge.

Pool Lifts are located at Palm Springs North, Tamiami, Tropical Estates, AD Barnes, Gould's (closed for construction), Helen Sands, and Naranja pools.

Beach Wheelchairs are located at Crandon (call 786-336-6982) and Haulover (call 786-336-6990) Beaches.

Single Rider Golf Carts are located at Country Club of Miami (305-829-8456) and Palmetto Golf (305-235-1069) courses. The carts can be transported to any County Course by calling either of these courses and requesting the cart in advance.

We are always interested in hearing from persons with disabilities. Please feel free to contact us with suggestions and comments at the Parks Disability Services Office, 305-365-6706.



2011 PARENTS "TYING IN TOGETHER" NIGHT AT TAMAMI PARK

The room filled up quickly on May 12, 2011 as the MD-PDS Tamiami Afterschool program held the end the year Parent information Night. We welcomed the parents as they went by the display of Silk Art, Canvas Art, Paper Mache, Recycled Art and Clay pieces the children had made throughout the year. We introduced the staff and began the night by giving the audience information about our MD Park Foundation Membership. We then talked about our program enhancements this year with the SPARKS and EmPower Me activities, which lead us into our Art project. A few participants helped us pass out a square piece of white cloth to all the children who attend our program. We asked the parents to assist their children in drawing or writing something they learned, enjoyed and experienced while at the program this year. It was a delight to see the parents engaged with their children asking what they did at the park. The children replied with various activities such as, basketball, running, soccer, jumping jacks, sit ups, pool, playground and



bowling. The quilt pieces came to life with drawings and words some mentioned social words such as Amigitos and playing games together. Bright and happy moments were captured on these pieces. We had the parents come up a few at a time with the painted squares to "TIE this year all together" by tying the squares together. At the end we made a Tamiami Park Family Quilt full of experiences the participants had throughout this year. The parents expressed how much they enjoyed this activity and how it is nice to be part of such a caring group. We then followed by giving the children their 1st place ribbons and checks awarded to them by the MD Fair and Expo for their items they exhibited in The MD County Fair Exposition of 2011. The children posed for pictures and the Parents and children were clapping and cheering for each child. PDS Tamiami Park was also awarded the Superintendent's Choice Award by The MD County Fair and Exposition and we all took pictures with the plaque. We concluded the night by giving a preview of the summer activities and thanked the entire group for coming to our parent night and for being part of our MD-PDS Tamiami Afterschool program.

SUMMER IS Here!

Parks Disability Services Summer Camp Program begins June 13th, 2011. This program is funded through The Children's Trust. The programs will be held at 7 sites throughout Miami Dade County. Children will participate in sports, art & crafts, literacy, field trips, and lots of fun activities. We will be getting **"Fit to Play"** while **"Greening it Up"**.

Reminder to parents for children participating in TCT Summer Camp programs:

- Have your child bring a reusable water bottle to camp everyday.
- Make sure your child eats a well-balanced meal at home and drinks plenty of water to prevent exhaustion and dehydration.
- It is recommended that children bring an extra pair of clothes to camp.
- Please have your child arrive to the park at least 15 minutes before scheduled field trip departure times.
- Please make sure your child wears sun block everyday.
- Please make sure your child wears closed-toe shoes that they can run around in. Do not have your child attend the program wearing sandals in order to prevent injury.
- Staff cannot be responsible for valuables brought to camp nor hold money for participants. Please do not allow your child to bring personal electronic devices or money to camp.
- Participation in the TCT Summer Camp programs is a 5-day a week experience. Children who are not able to attend on a regular basis may be withdrawn from the program in order to accommodate another child who is on our waiting list.

Miami Dade Parks and Recreation Department

2011 Job Fair at the Leisure Access Center

On Friday, April 1st, the Leisure Access Center hosted the 2011 Job Fair coordinated by Taina Lorraine Fernandez, Recreation Therapy Intern from Florida International University. The Leisure Access Center Job Fair was established in response to the needs of the adults with intellectual disabilities in order to provide them, their families, and staff with valuable information about supported employment services. The event was made possible due to information provided by an important group of professionals: Montrese Albury, Supported Employment Specialist from the APD office, Brenda Lampon, Government Operations Consultant II from Division of Vocational Rehabilitation from Florida Department of Education,

and Lixon Nelson, Employment Specialist from Alliance Community and Employment Services, Inc; who shared some of the successful testimonials of more than 5,000 people with disabilities who have joined the work force in our country. Once a person who has a disability has made the decision to seek job opportunities, the professional from the supported employment services guides that person throughout the proper steps to assure their success. After the person's support coordinator contacts Montrese Albury, vocational rehabilitation services are provided through The Florida Department of Education and an Employment Specialist gets the case assigned. The service takes individual interests into consideration when making a decision about what type of work to perform.

The Adults with developmental disabilities from Miami-Dade County Park and Disability Services at the Leisure Access Center receive continuous exposure to different careers during community integration outings. Our staff are dedicated to promote independence and work with the Center's adults in the acquisition of vocational and life skills to prepare them for the work. The Leisure Access Center 2011 Job Fair was a great opportunity to gather information about available resources and the benefits associated with supported employment. We thank all the individuals who participated and made this first annual event a successful one!



A program of Miami-Dade Parks & Recreation Leisure Access Services

PARALYMPIC NEWS

MDPR SENDS JR. SWIMMERS TO THE 2011 DIXIE GAMES

A team of four swimmers, Jesse Blanco, Miguel Caballero- Perez, Alijah Jackson and Brian Douglas travelled to Tampa on May 12 - 15, to compete in the 2011 Dixie Games. These games are for athletes with a physical or visual disability.

The meet got underway, but had to be cancelled after only six events, due to bad weather. Brian Douglas was the only swimmer to participate in the 25 yd freestyle. Brian placed first in the Under 11 age group with a time of 26.8 seconds. Unfortunately, the other three boys did not get a chance to compete, due to meet cancellation.



Although disappointed, everyone attended the awards Pirate party in the evening, and all four swimmers enjoyed dancing the whole night. Brian Douglas was awarded the Spirit of Excellence Award for the games. This award is provided to the junior athlete who displays exemplary vision, focus, commitment, persistence, discipline and sportsmanship. Belinda Phillips, swim coach, was especially grateful for the Mom's who assisted during the trip.

The Dixie Games is an excellent opportunity for young and upcoming athletes with physical disabilities and visual impairments to experience competition at a National level and has been a catalyst for launching future Paralympic hopefuls.

Wheelchair Tennis Player Wins Tournament



Fernando Dibujes has been participating in Miami-Dade Parks and Recreation wheelchair tennis league for the past 6 years. This year Mr. Dibujes has had the opportunity to take part in the USTA Tournament and the Florida Open International Wheelchair Tennis tournament thanks to the Leisure Access Foundation. This past April was the 2011 Florida Open International Wheelchair Tennis tournament. Mr. Dibujes participated in the Men's Wheelchair A Doubles in which he and his partner, Jeffrey A. Rush won the final round. Mr. Dibujes also played in the Men's Wheelchair B Singles Division. After winning all his tournaments Fernando ending up being ranked #1 in the nation in his division. Mr. Dibujes and his family are so proud of his accomplishment. Disability Services are most proud of his dedication and commitment to the sport and it shows. The Wheelchair Tennis program takes place every Saturday from 9-10:30 AM at the Big 5 Tennis Center. Call Diana Bonet at 305-380-9106 for more information.

GO HEAT WHEELS!



This season, the Miami Heat Wheels proved strong and mighty as they rose above all the challenges they faced. The team welcomed new coach, Parnes Cartright, as well as bid farewell to some of the team's starting players who received scholarships to play wheelchair basketball. Having to adjust to so many changes would seem like it would affect the team's morale but the team proved otherwise. As old players returned and new players joined the program, the Miami Heat Wheels went on to finish with a 16-6 season and are now currently ranked #7 out of 85 teams in the DIII division nationwide. For more information on wheelchair basketball call 305-234-1673.

MDPR CREATES A GOALBALL LEAGUE

Over the last couple of years, the Goalball program offered by MDPR has grown tremendously. In order to provide all of the program participants with the opportunity to experience competition, MDPR has now developed a local Goalball league. There are currently four teams which are able to compete against one another during local mini-tournaments. Teams are made up of experienced players as well as developmental players so that team skill level is even and newer participants have the opportunity to learn from more experienced players. Having a Goalball league provides more individuals with visual impairments the opportunity to engage in a sport and experience the thrill of competition. The Goalball program runs on Saturdays from mid-September through mid-April. For more information on Goalball call 305-234-1673.



Above: Members of the Goalball participate in the League's first Mini-Tournament.

For information on access for persons with disabilities, sign language interpreters (7 days in advance), or information in accessible format call (305)365-6706.